

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An electronic book data delivery apparatus comprising:  
storage means having stored a plurality of book data each representing  
the content of an electronic book, a plurality of reciter images each for reading  
5 aloud the content of a book represented by a respective one of the plurality of book  
data, and a plurality of voice data each representing a voice of a respective one of  
the plurality of reciter images;

receiving means for receiving a request for delivery of a selected one of the  
plurality of book data and at least one selected one of the plurality of reciter  
10 images for reading aloud the selected book data from an external electronic book  
device via communicating means; and

sending means, responsive to the request for delivery, for reading the  
selected book data, the at least one reciter image, and voice data representing the  
voice of the at least one reciter image from said storage means and for sending  
15 those data via the communication means to said external electronic book device.

2. The electronic book data delivery apparatus according to claim 1,  
wherein:

the book data comprises a plurality of character images appearing in the  
20 electronic book; and

said sending means comprises image sending means for sending said  
external electronic book device selected ones of the plurality of reciter images and  
the selected plurality of character images.

25 3. The electronic book data delivery apparatus according to claim 1,  
wherein:

said storage means comprises substorage means in which the plurality of

reciter images and the plurality of character images appearing in the electronic book are stored in corresponding relationship; and

said sending means comprises image sending means for sending the plurality of reciter images and the plurality of character images stored in said

5 substorage means to the external electronic book device.

4. The electronic book data delivery apparatus according to claim 3, wherein:

said character image sending means comprises voice data sending means  
10 for sending the plurality of voice data each representing the voice of a respective one of the plurality of reciter images stored in said storage means to the external electronic book device when the plurality of reciter images are sent to the external electronic book device.

15 5. An electronic book data delivery apparatus comprising:

first receiving means for receiving at least one reciter image and corresponding voice data used to read the contents of an electronic book aloud, via a network from an external terminal:

storage means for storing the at least one reciter image and  
20 corresponding voice data in corresponding relationship;

second receiving means for receiving a request for delivery of at least one reciter image via a network from an external electronic book device; and

sending means, responsive to said second receiving means receiving the request for delivery, for reading out the at least one reciter image and  
25 corresponding voice data that satisfy the request from said storage means, and for sending the read at least one image and corresponding voice data to the external electronic book device.

6. The electronic book data delivery apparatus according to claim 5, further comprising:

price data receiving means, responsive to said electronic book data  
5 delivery apparatus receiving the at least one reciter image and corresponding  
voice data from the external terminal via the network and/or responsive to said  
electronic book data delivery apparatus sending the at least one reciter image and  
corresponding voice data to the external electronic book device at its request, for  
receiving data on the price and/or a charge for delivery of the at least one reciter  
10 image and corresponding voice data.

7. The electronic book data delivery apparatus according to claim 5, further comprising:

publishing means for publishing on the network the plurality of reciter  
15 images stored in said storage means; and

said sending means comprises means for reading at least one reciter  
image and corresponding voice data from said storage means at a request of the  
external electronic book device and for sending the read at least one image and  
corresponding voice data to the external electronic book device.

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8. The electronic book data delivery apparatus according to claim 7, wherein:

said publishing means comprises means, responsive to said electronic  
book data delivery apparatus receiving at least one reciter image via the network  
25 from the external terminal, for publishing the received at least one reciter image  
on the network.

9. An electronic book device connected via a network to an external book data delivery source having stored a plurality of book titles, a plurality of reciter images and a plurality of voice data each representing a voice of a respective one of the plurality of reciter images, comprising:

5 first receiving means for receiving via the network a plurality of book titles and a plurality of reciter images each used to read aloud the contents of a book having a respective one of the plurality of book titles;

specifying means for specifying a desired one from among the plurality of book titles received by said first receiving means and at least one desired reciter  
10 image from among the plurality of reciter images for causing the specified at least one desired image to read aloud the contents of the book having the specified title;

second receiving means for receiving book data having the specified book title, the specified at least one reciter image, and the corresponding voice data from the external book data delivery source;

15 display means for displaying the book data and the at least one reciter image received by said second receiving means; and

reproducing means for reproducing the content of the book that is represented by the book data displayed by said display means in a voice(s) represented by the voice data corresponding to the displayed at least one reciter  
20 image.

10. The electronic book device according to claim 9, wherein:  
said book data comprises a plurality of character images each  
representing a character appearing in the electronic book.

25 11. A recording medium that comprises a computer readable program which causes a computer to operate as an electronic book data delivery

apparatus comprising:

storage means having stored a plurality of book data each representing the content of an electronic book, a plurality of reciter images each for reading aloud the content of a book represented by a respective one of the plurality of book data, and a plurality of voice data each representing a voice of a respective one of the plurality of reciter images;

receiving means for receiving a request for delivery of a selected one of the plurality of book data and at least one selected one of the plurality of reciter images for reading aloud the selected book data from an external electronic book device via communicating means; and

sending means, responsive to the request for delivery, for reading the selected book data, the at least one reciter image, and voice data representing the voice of the at least one reciter image from said storage means and for sending those data via the communication means to said external electronic book device.

12. The recording medium according to claim 11, wherein:

the book data comprises a plurality of character images appearing in the electronic book; and

said sending means comprises image sending means for sending said external electronic book device selected ones of the plurality of reciter images and the selected plurality of character images.

13. The recording medium according to claim according to claim 11, wherein:

said storage means comprises substorage means in which the plurality of reciter images and the plurality of character images appearing in the electronic book are stored in corresponding relationship; and

said sending means comprises image sending means for sending the plurality of reciter images and the plurality of character images stored in said substorage means to the external electronic book device.

5           14.     The electronic book data delivery apparatus according to claim 13, wherein:

              said character image sending means comprises voice data sending means for sending the plurality of voice data each representing the voice of a respective one of the plurality of reciter images stored in said storage means to the external  
10    electronic book device when the plurality of reciter images are sent to the external electronic book device.

              15.     A recording medium that comprises a computer readable program which causes a computer to operate as an electronic book data delivery  
15    apparatus comprising:

              first receiving means for receiving at least one reciter image and corresponding voice data used to read the contents of an electronic book aloud, via a network from an external terminal;

              storage means for storing the at least one reciter image and  
20    corresponding voice data in corresponding relationship;

              second receiving means for receiving a request for delivery of at least one reciter image via a network from an external electronic book device; and

              sending means, responsive to said second receiving means receiving the request for delivery, for reading out the at least one reciter image and  
25    corresponding voice data that satisfy the request from said storage means, and for sending the read at least one image and corresponding voice data to the external electronic book device.

16. The recording medium according to claim 15, wherein the electronic book data delivery apparatus further comprises:

means, responsive to said electronic book data delivery apparatus  
5 receiving the at least one reciter image and corresponding voice data from the external terminal via the network and/or responsive to said electronic book data delivery apparatus sending the at least one reciter image and corresponding voice data to the external electronic book device at its request, for receiving data on the price and/or a charge for delivery of the at least one reciter image and  
10 corresponding voice data.

17. The recording medium according to claim 15, wherein the electronic book data delivery apparatus according to claim 5, further comprising:

means for publishing on the network the plurality of reciter images stored  
15 in said storage means; and

said sending means comprises means for reading at least one reciter image and corresponding voice data from said storage means at a request of the external electronic book device and for sending the read at least one image and corresponding voice data to the external electronic book device.  
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18. The recording medium according to claim 15, wherein the electronic book data delivery apparatus according to claim 5, wherein:

said publishing means comprises means, responsive to said electronic book data delivery apparatus receiving at least one reciter image via the network  
25 from the external terminal, for publishing the received at least one reciter image on the network.

19. A recording medium that comprises a computer readable program which causes a computer to operates as an electronic book device connected via a network to an external book data delivery source having stored a plurality of book titles, a plurality of reciter images and a plurality of voice data each representing a voice of a respective one of the plurality of reciter images ,  
5 comprising:

first receiving means for receiving via the network a plurality of book titles and a plurality of reciter images each used to read aloud the contents of a book having a respective one of the plurality of book titles;

10 specifying means for specifying a desired one from among the plurality of book titles received by said first receiving means and at least one desired reciter image from among the plurality of reciter images for causing the specified at least one desired image to read aloud the contents of the book having the specified title;

second receiving means for receiving book data having the specified book  
15 title, the specified at least one reciter image, and the corresponding voice data from the external book data delivery source;

display means for displaying the book data and the at least one reciter image received by said second receiving means; and

means for reproducing the content of the book that is represented by the  
20 book data displayed by said display means in a voice(s) represented by the voice data corresponding to the displayed at least one reciter image.

20. A computer readable program which causes a computer to operate as an electronic book data delivery apparatus comprising:

25 first receiving means for receiving at least one reciter image and corresponding voice data used to read the contents of an electronic book aloud, via a network from an external terminal;



storage means for storing the at least one reciter image and corresponding voice data in corresponding relationship;

second receiving means for receiving a request for delivery of at least one reciter image via a network from an external electronic book device; and

5        sending means, responsive to said second receiving means receiving the request for delivery, for reading out the at least one reciter image and corresponding voice data that satisfy the request from said storage means, and for sending the read at least one image and corresponding voice data to the external electronic book device.

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